

# INFORMATION LETTER

Not for  
Publication

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

For Members  
Only

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## Canning Industry Importance, Public Service Values Cited

American housewives open and serve about 400 million cans and jars of canned foods every week and they have more than 1,000 different items to choose from. American farmers are paid more than \$1 billion annually by canners for the fresh products they put up for the public.

These facts and other statistics demonstrating the economic importance and public service values of canned foods were recited by N.C.A. Vice President Norman Sorensen at the fall meeting of the Illinois Canners Association November 6. Mr. Sorensen urged his hearers to let the public know about the many contributions canned foods make to the nation's welfare.

"Since canning crops are grown under contract, they insure the farmer a market for his entire production at a price agreed upon before his crop is even planted. The canning industry thus plays an important role in helping farmers attain economic stability," he stated. He showed that approximately half of the U. S. acreage of vegetables and one-fifth of the fruit production is used for processing; about four-fifths of all tomatoes and beets; two-thirds of the sweet corn; and about one-half of the asparagus.

Mr. Sorensen pointed out the advantage of making use of facts from studies conducted by the N.C.A. under its Consumer and Trade Relations program. Most canners don't have the time or money to make individual surveys, but with a little thought and ingenious application, they can make practical use of the wealth of information contained in the C.&T.R. bulletins and the N.C.A. INFORMATION LETTER, he pointed out.

## Minimum Wage in Puerto Rico

The minimum wage in the canning industry in Puerto Rico will be raised from 65 to 70 cents an hour, effective November 17, under terms of a wage order issued by the Wage and Hour Administrator and published in the *Federal Register* of October 31.

## USDA Survey of Consumer Attitudes Finds General Satisfaction with Tin Can as a Container and with Existing Label Information

The Agricultural Marketing Service of USDA has reported on consumer attitudes toward canned foods and frozen foods in three cities, Atlanta, Kansas City, and San Francisco, as determined in a special survey made there in June of 1956.

The survey sought to measure patterns of use of canned foods and frozen foods in those cities and to determine homemakers' views with regard to containers, label information, and considerations of quality, storage, and size. Results of the survey are contained in some 90 tables and a number of pages of discussion.

The report is entitled *Consumers Appraise Canned and Frozen Foods, Their Packages and Labels*, in Atlanta, Kansas City, and San Francisco, and is USDA Marketing Research Report No. 270.

### THE PACKAGE

On the whole, consumers approved the standard containers used for both canned and frozen foods.

First in terms of positive attributes for cans was storage—the fact that canned foods can be stored indefinitely. Other reasons given for liking canned foods were convenience, chiefly that they are easy to open; and their availability, in a variety of sizes, a variety of foods, and in all seasons.

There were four principal dislikes of canned foods: key-type can difficult or dangerous to open; hard to open, dislike to open, or dangerous; flavor changes; and hard to open cans without rims (milk).

About 9 out of 10 homemakers in each of the three cities responded that they were satisfied with existing container sizes for canned foods. But, when asked to suggest changes or improvements, about 3 out of 10 offered suggestions, the principal one being for "more variety in can sizes."

Information dealing with the homemakers' knowledge of specific can size was also collected. A large number of homemakers indicated awareness of the different sizes, with about 15 percent asserting the existence of the nonexistent No. 5. Generally, most of

the homemakers were unable to state the correct number of ounces or servings to be obtained from each size container.

### THE LABEL

The key item on the label of both canned and frozen foods is brand name; package size and weight were far down the scale.

Most of the homemakers indicated that they referred to labels very seldom if at all, but the change most often suggested was for more recipes.

The report suggests that consumer confidence may be based, in part, on the belief that contents of a can might be inferior were it not for the need to describe the product on the label.

### PATTERNS OF USE

Almost all homemakers in the three cities had used one or more canned food products in the month preceding the interview in June, 1956. Whether or not canned foods were used appeared to be the same irrespective of family size, educational background, or income level. Such variations as did exist were relatively minor.

The report also covers the frequency of use of specific items of canned, frozen, and fresh vegetables, fruits, juices, soups, and meats; and reasons for not using these products.

## 1958 Pack of Sweet Corn

The 1958 pack of canned sweet corn totaled 32,078,437 actual cases as compared with the 1957 pack of 37,516,892 cases, according to a report by the N.C.A. Division of Statistics.

The totals do not include field corn, corn on the cob, or any mixtures with ingredients other than peppers.

The total supply (pack and carry-over) of canned corn for the 1958-59 season is about 6 million cases or 14 percent less than last year's supply, and is about 700,000 cases less than the total shipments for the 1957-58 season.

The short supply situation is most evident in the Midwest, especially for

golden corn. The supply in the West is down slightly from a year ago, while the supply in the East is somewhat more than at the beginning of the 1957-58 season.

The supply of golden corn is 6.2 million cases or 19 percent less than a year ago and the supply of white corn is up about 350,000 cases or 12 percent. Most of the decrease in supply of golden corn is concentrated in whole kernel. By can size, the largest decrease in supply is in whole kernel golden in No. 303 cans. At last year's rate of shipment this year's supply of whole kernel golden 303's is the equivalent of only about 10½ months'

supply. The supply of 12-oz. vacuum pack whole kernel corn is short of last year's shipments by 666,000 cases and is the equivalent of 11 months' supply.

In contrast to golden, the supply of white corn is about 700,000 cases above the total volume of 1957-58 shipments. The only item in the white corn group for which the supply is below last year is whole kernel in No. 10's and cream style in No. 10's.

A special summary of the supply situation for canned corn was sent to all corn canners this week by the N.C.A. Statistics Division. Additional copies are available.

**CANNERS' SUPPLY OF CANNED CORN, BY TYPE, CAN SIZE, AND QUALITY**

Type, Can Size, and Quality	Supply 1957-58 (thousands of actual cases)	Supply 1958-59 (thousands of actual cases)	Per- cent change from 1957-58
U. S. Total.....	43,149	37,258	-14
Golden, total.....	40,153	33,915	-16
Whole kernel.....	22,852	18,539	-19
48/8 oz.....	2,077	1,822	-12
24/12Z vac.....	9,117	7,297	-20
24/303.....	8,971	6,921	-23
Cream style.....	17,301	15,376	-11
48/8 oz.....	1,615	1,524	-6
24/303.....	14,780	13,085	-12
6/10.....	839	735	-12
White, total.....	2,996	3,343	+12
Whole kernel.....	1,106	1,378	+16
48/8 oz.....	41	49	+20
24/303.....	1,000	1,135	+16
6/10.....	42	39	-7
Cream style.....	1,890	2,065	+9
48/8 oz.....	201	202	.....
24/303.....	1,633	1,816	+11
6/10.....	51	42	-18

**CANNERS' SUPPLY OF CANNED CORN, BY REGION, TYPE, AND QUALITY**

Region, Type and Quality	Supply 1957-58 (thousands of actual cases)	Supply 1958-59 (thousands of actual cases)	Per- cent change from 1957-58
East, total.....	4,524	5,080	+12
Golden, total.....	4,220	4,487	+6
Whole kernel.....	1,513	1,737	+15
Cream style.....	2,707	2,750	+2
White, total.....	304	593	+95
Whole kernel.....	304	593	+95
Midwest, total.....	32,982	26,640	-19
Golden, total.....	30,290	23,890	-21
Whole kernel.....	18,646	14,336	-23
Cream style.....	11,644	9,553	-18
White, total.....	2,692	2,750	+2
Whole kernel.....	834	750	-10
Cream style.....	1,858	2,000	+8
West, total.....	5,643	5,538	-2
Golden total.....	5,643	5,538	-2
Whole kernel.....	2,693	2,466	-8
Cream style.....	2,950	3,073	+4

\*Includes a small quantity of cream style.

**1958 PACK OF CORN BY STATE AND VARIETY**

Region and State	1957		1958	
	White (actual cases)	Golden	White (actual cases)	Golden
East:				
Maine, Vt., and N. H.....		934,487		699,299
New York.....		1,638,923		1,281,323
Maryland.....	90,603	577,077	392,522	1,512,567
Pennsylvania.....	69,276	321,606	196,851	300,392
Other states.....	(b)	178,684		286,092
Midwest:				
Ohio.....	(a)	546,507	(a)	805,843
Indiana.....	(a)		241,105	(a)
Illinois.....	1,057,804	5,485,236	1,530,676	4,007,284
Wisconsin.....	170,249	9,035,337	235,657	6,461,028
Minnesota.....	(a)	9,008,015	(a)	7,181,631
Iowa.....	69,644	1,806,845	68,898	998,673
Other states.....	577,573	936,437	332,634	1,034,252
Western states.....		4,952,589		4,847,019
U. S. Total.....	2,035,149	35,481,743	2,993,043	29,085,394

(a) Included in other states.

(b) Small amount included in Pa. include field corn, corn on the cob, or any mixture with ingredients other than peppers.

The totals do not in-

### MSSA To Experiment with Palletized Unit Loads

The MSSA is interested in exploring and developing the method of shipping subsistence in palletized unit loads and has invited offers on five canned foods to be furnished in that form of packaging.

NIP's were issued this week from Chicago for canned peas, corn, and catsup and from Oakland for pineapple juice and tomato juice, all to be delivered to the Government in palletized units.

Cases will be loaded on wooden pallets, covered on top and sides with fibreboard sheathing, and strapped to the load base, according to Government specifications. Inspection teams from Ft. Lee, Va., will observe the palletizing and sheathing operation.

Palletized loading is conceived as a means of reducing handling and shipping costs and damage in transit.

### First Petition Filed under Food Additives Law

The first petition for a safety tolerance under the recently enacted food additives law is for a chemical to be used in livestock feed. FDA has published the proposal in the *Federal Register*, and has explained in a public announcement some of the procedural steps involved, as follows:

"The company's petition is the first formal step that is required to obtain approval of its proposed use of the chemical food additive. The petition was officially filed by FDA on October 14, 1958. Within 90 days after the filing date, FDA will publish a proposed regulation accepting, modifying, or rejecting the petition. Any person adversely affected by the proposed regulation has 30 days to file objections and request a public hearing."

FDA explained that the first petition was filed by Monsanto Chemical Company for use of an antioxidant. The chemical would be used to treat 16 major forage crops in the process by which they are commercially dehydrated for sale to mixed feed manufacturers. Purpose of the treatment would be to protect the dehydrated forage from loss of nutrients by oxidation destruction. The petitioner requested a tolerance of 150 ppm.

## Referendum on Corn Programs

A referendum will be held among corn growers in the commercial corn-producing area on November 25 to determine which of two alternative corn programs will be in effect in 1959 and subsequent years, as authorized by the Agricultural Act of 1958. The two programs to be voted on are:

**Program No. 1**, under which there would be no acreage allotments and no commercial corn-producing area. All corn producers would be eligible for price support without any restrictions on acreage. The level of support would be 90 percent of the average corn price received by growers during the preceding three years but not less than 65 percent of parity at the beginning of the marketing year. Present estimates indicate that price support on 1959-crop corn would be from \$1.12 to \$1.15 a bushel, national average.

The law provides that if Program No. 1 is approved, price support would be mandatory for oats, rye, barley, and grain sorghums.

**Program No. 2**, which is essentially the same program that was in effect in 1958 and earlier years. Under this program a commercial corn-producing area is determined each year and acreage allotments are in effect in the area unless terminated under the emergency authority of the Secretary to meet a national emergency or a material increase in export demand. Corn allotments have been terminated under this emergency authority during 10 of the years since 1938.

Price support is available in the commercial area only to those who comply with their acreage allotments. The minimum support level is from 75 to 90 percent of parity, depending on the supply of corn. Present estimates indicate that price support on 1959-crop corn within farm allotments would be at a level of 75 percent of parity—from \$1.24 to \$1.27 a bushel, national average. As in the past, support would be available in non-commercial areas at three-fourths of the commercial rate.

A simple majority of the votes cast in the referendum will determine which program will be in effect in 1959 and subsequent years. In general, those who produced corn in 1958 or had an interest in the corn crop in the 1958 commercial corn area are eligible to vote; also, those who had a 1958 corn allotment and produced no corn, or planted corn and did not harvest it, or placed their 1958 farm corn allotment in the Soil Bank.

## Wage Structure in Canning in Georgia and Florida

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has studied the effects of the \$1 statutory minimum wage in selected areas and has published a report in which it describes the wage structure for non-supervisory workers in Georgia fruit and vegetable canneries and in Florida citrus canning and freezing plants.

The survey covered peak period operations in 18 plants in Georgia and 38 plants in Florida. In Georgia three-fifths of the non-supervisory workers were employed in canneries in which pimientos were the major product, and a wide variety of other fruits and vegetables were canned. In Florida the majority of the workers were employed in plants canning citrus fruits and juices and two-fifths were employed in frozen concentrate plants. Some were in plants engaged in both canning and freezing. Women represented about seven-tenths of the non-supervisory work force in Georgia and a slight majority in Florida.

The report contains tables and discussions of the effects of the increase in the statutory minimum wage, effective in March of 1956, the average hourly earnings, and earnings distribution by sex, occupation, and size of community. The following tabulation, while not intended as a basis for comparison between the Georgia and Florida operations, presents wage data extracted from the BLS report:

	Nonsupervisory Workers	
	Georgia	Florida
	Sept.-Oct. 1957	Jan.-Feb. 1957
Number of establishments.....	18	38
within Area of Production....	9	11
Number of workers.....	1,923	12,031
men.....	559	5,933
women.....	1,364	6,098
Average hourly earnings.....	\$0.99	\$1.27
men.....	1.00	1.25
women.....	0.99	1.28
communities less than 2,500..	0.96	1.19
communities 2,500 or more....	1.02	1.28
less than 101 workers.....	0.90	....
101 or more workers.....	1.01	....
less than 251 workers.....	....	1.18
251-500 workers.....	....	1.26
501 or more workers.....	....	1.30
canning.....	....	1.30
freezing.....	....	1.22

Source: *Studies of the Effects of the \$1 Minimum Wage: Wage Structure in Canning and Freezing* (BLS Report No. 136), Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Aug. 1958.

## Canned Foods To Be Featured in Super Market Promotion

Taking leadership in the observance of Super Market Month in January, *McCall's* magazine announces that its four-color food editorial scheduled for that month will feature recipes for dishes involving nearly 40 different canned foods, into a display banner for supermarkets across the country. The foods will be pictured against the background of the center spread of N.C.A.'s "Almost Complete Canner," listing more than 1,000 canned foods.

In addition to the food editorial, *McCall's* will distribute a kit of other materials, including a specially-prepared television film emphasizing the importance of the supermarket.

N.C.A. Secretary Carlos Campbell gave details of the Super Market Month campaign to the membership in letters October 23 and November 4, urging them to use every facility to gain merchandising advantages from the campaign. Members also have been furnished a list of the 37 canned foods to be included in the *McCall's* feature as well as a list of the 53 chain organizations, with a total of 1,370 outlets, that have signed up.

In commending *McCall's* for their five years of leadership in the Super Market Month observance, Mr. Campbell pointed out that the "consumer size package, first introduced in volume by the canning industry, emancipated the grocer from the insanitary practice of serving the public from open bulk supplies in bins, barrels, tubs, boxes and baskets. More than that, this innovation of canners made possible the modern practice of customer self-service," he said.

"We of the canning industry are particularly aware of the great contribution to public welfare that has been made through self-service, the distribution technique so efficiently employed in supermarkets."

The Association's public relations counsel, Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy, has been working closely with the promotion service at *McCall's* and has been informed that displays, special promotions, advertising, publicity and numerous other consumer attractions will be used by supermarket operators. In the October 23 advice to N.C.A. members, it was suggested that they send bulletins to their brokers suggesting they contact retail customers to ensure that canned food inventories are adequate for major store promotions, since canned foods will be a major element in the Super Market Month promotion.



## REPORTS ON ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

### Information Division

A major activity of the Information Division in the period covered by this report, August through October, was the special promotion of "September is Canned Foods Month."

The Division participated in all the planning conferences between N.C.A. and the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce for Exhibits at both these agencies and for the official Salutes on September 2. During August it worked in liaison with the information sections of both agencies in the preparation of announcements, releases, statements, special articles, salute speeches, and other publicity phases of the event. It provided the basic language in the messages and themes portrayed by the Government exhibits. The U. S. Steel Exhibit, in the Department of Commerce foyer, was a graphic presentation of highlights of *The Canning Industry*, booklet produced by the Information Division. The Division assisted in the physical construction, as well as the idea-portrayal of the N.C.A. exhibits at both places.

For the Washington press and radio-TV corps the Division prepared a publicity kit containing a fact sheet on September Month, copies of the speeches and statements, and a press release on the occasion. It supervised the news photography and distribution of pictures and captions to the publications.

The Division arranged for wide radio and TV coverage and furnished scripts and outlines for interviews on both local and network programs. This work placed the September Month Salute on 49 regional and 5 national network shows. Information Division material on September Month appeared also in 450 newspapers, 6 magazines, and 73 trade publications. The grand total of readers and viewers covered amounted to 68,832,835, according to a tally of clippings and radio-TV monitoring reports received.

Apart from the Government Salute event, the Division made other contributions to the observance. In collaboration with Dudley-Anderson-Yutzky, it prepared a special press kit for use of N.C.A. members, showing them how, and furnishing copy for their individual tie-ins on September Month with local clubs, schools, store managers, newspapers, and broadcasters.

#### ACTIVE IN C.&T.R. PROGRAM

The Division continued its work on Consumer and Trade Relations projects in collaboration with the DAY agency and other N.C.A. divisions. The Director participated in conferences in New York and Washington dealing with Convention publicity plans, the canning crops contest, the food editor project—*Canner's View*

of the United States, and other items of the Program. The Division assisted editorially with the popular version of Philadelphia Project No. 5—*Seasonal Patterns in Retail Sales of Canned Foods*; in the preparation of merchandising suggestions for reprints from *American Home*, *Seventeen*, *American Weekly*, and *Chain Store Age*; and in the preparation of special feature articles for newspaper syndicates, agricultural, and youth publications.

#### PRESS RELEASES

Ten press releases were issued by the Information Division during the three-month period. The messages carried by these releases dealt with the great contribution the industry makes to farmers and to consumer welfare, with the "best buy" aspects of canned foods, the industry's scientific basis, its encouragement and assistance to youth, and its record in meeting national disasters and crises.

#### ARTICLES AND SPEECHES

The Division has a continuing program of assisting N.C.A. staff members and officers with their public speeches and articles and is constantly furnishing help to editors, publishers and writers with data they need. This assistance ranges all the way from merely editing copy submitted to writing complete and original drafts. During the period of this report, the Division assembled material enabling a speaker to show how Alaska's economy was bettered by the salmon canning industry; wrote the biographical article on Appert for publication in *Encyclopedia Britannica*; contributed an article to the annual edition of *Seafood Merchandising* and another one on N.C.A. research for *Tin News*; assisted Science Service Syndicate with its feature

article on canning industry research; provided data for a leaflet on canned fruits, in preparation by the Foreign Agriculture Service of USDA; and assisted other staff members on seven occasions with speech copy and statements for radio-TV appearances.

#### INFORMATION LETTER

The coverage of the INFORMATION LETTER reflected normal seasonal shifts in the kinds of information most useful to members during the August-through-October period.

Three of the regular USDA crop reports, covering crop development and conditions on August 1, September 1 and October 1, were issued. Each of these was analyzed with regard to crops and conditions of concern to canners, and reports on crop development, as well as the statistical presentations in tabular form, were prepared by the INFORMATION LETTER staff.

The INFORMATION LETTER was in contact with USDA personnel handling the school lunch program, and thus was able to report promptly on USDA intentions to buy and USDA purchases. Most of the announcements on the school lunch program are made by USDA on Fridays, and special arrangements were made by the INFORMATION LETTER to obtain the information for the issues going to press on those Friday nights.

Carrying through in its assistance to the Secretary's Office in reporting legislative matters, the INFORMATION LETTER staff contributed importantly to the preparation of the summary of legislative activity by the 85th Congress in the September 20 issue.

Members have requested that the INFORMATION LETTER contain more information on general economic activity and the trend of the economy. In response to such requests, the INFORMATION LETTER has collected, analyzed and reported, with greater frequency and in more detail than before, on business factors as indicated by Government statistics.

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